

**GLOBAL FEMINISMS PROJECT PODCAST SERIES:
CONTEXTUALIZING FEMINIST VOICES:
TEACHING WITH THE GLOBAL FEMINISMS PROJECT**

**Topic: Courses on the History of
Latin America and of Latin American Feminisms**

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Intro: Welcome to Contextualizing Feminist Voices: Teaching with the Global Feminisms Project. This series is focused on teaching, pedagogy and uses of the archive in the context of the classroom. Designed with a special emphasis on educators, in each episode you will learn from instructors who have used the project's interviews in their courses, and about activities and resources for incorporating the archive into your class.

Hanna Smith: This episode features recordings from the Global Feminisms Project's conference: "Teaching Global Feminisms: Using Activist Interviews Across Disciplines," which took place virtually on October 9, 2021. You can also view the entire program on our website. On this podcast, we will hear from University of Michigan Professor Sueann Caulfield who will outline how she has used the resources in the Global Feminisms Project archive to teach about the history of Latin America and Latin American Feminisms.

Sueann Caulfield: I teach Latin American history and I've been using individual Global Feminisms interviews from the Latin American collections in several of my classes for a number of years. And these include interviews from Brazil and Nicaragua, and then this year interviews from Peru were added. And the interviews-- I usually assign them in their entirety and I will choose specific interviews for students to read that I'll contextualize for them.

And they can be used, they lend themselves really easily to illustrating how individuals experienced specific events and eras that I'm teaching about in Latin American political and social history, and they are also really great tools for teaching historical thinking by asking students to analyze how and why the each of the interviewees developed her perspective within a specific historical context. The patterned ways that these interviews were framed uniquely support this kind of critical analysis, because each interview begins by asking the interviewee to talk about your childhood and reflect on why they became activist and how and why they developed a feminist consciousness and what feminism means to them. So just to give you one example: I use two interviews from Brazil. I asked students to compare the experiences of two different activists who came of age in the 1960s and 70s, one of whom identifies as white and the other Black. Maria Perez describes her childhood as the daughter of Italian immigrants, who were members of the Communist Party, and she recounts her experience with sexism within the party, and then how she became a feminist in prison where she and other women militants, many of them university students or university-educated--they were in the cell together and they experienced torture together by the military regime in the 1960s and early 70s. And the other interview is of Elizabeth Viana who describes growing up Black and feeling alienated from radical political parties until the formation of the Black movement in the 1970s and 80s. And she also describes sexism within the Black movement, but her experiences with white-led feminist organizations continued to make her hesitant to identify as a feminist even three decades later. And students who used these interviews, who read these interviews, they often comment that they perceived the political upheavals and social tensions of these decades of history in different ways, after seeing these interviews. And that they really appreciate

especially hearing how these historical actors interpret their own motivations and actions, which helps the students think about motivations in history within particular historical contexts, and also helps them think about how historical context shapes their motivations and their actions in their own lives.

And then, finally, I also used the body of interviews in a more comprehensive way when I created a new course on feminisms for first year students, “Feminisms in Latin America”, and this course I created with Eimeel Castillo who's a PhD candidate in History department and one of our collaborators in the Global Feminisms Project. And in that course I used teaching modules on Black feminisms and transnational feminisms that were created by Eimeel, and also by Romance Languages graduate student Marisol Fila.

So each of these Global Feminisms modules that I used in the first year seminar includes a PowerPoint presentation that helps to introduce the topic and the interviews, along with selected excerpts from multiple interviews, and then also they include guides for instructors and for the students. They describe how to do interactive group activities that prompt students to compare how feminists from various generations and in diverse locales understand and participate in different kinds of feminist movements: global feminist movements. These modules were really effective in giving substance to concepts such as the personal is political, and helping students see the role of individual agency in shaping history, as well as seeing how the contingencies shape identity and agency.

In sum, these materials really helped me teach core concepts in my field in ways that students have found engaging and enjoyable. And the modules were also remarkably time-saving for me because they're already put together! The excerpts are already selected and recorded.

Hanna Smith: As you have heard, Professor Caulfield stressed how the interviews demonstrate historical contingency and individual agency kind of running in both directions. And that is a very powerful feature. For many of us—not just historians—it is important to us that students think about individual life experience and individual phenomena in a historically situated way, so that contextual capacity is a really important feature of the website and using these interviews. It is worth noting that for each country site there is a historical timeline, as well as information about national statistical patterns and maps, provided to help with contextualizing the interviewees' accounts. We hope you found this podcast helpful in thinking about your teaching, and that other podcasts in this series are too. Please let us know how you use Global Feminisms Project materials in your class. We would love to post examples from your teaching on our website in the Teaching Resources Section.

Outro: Thank you for listening to this episode of Contextualizing Feminist Voices: Teaching with the Global Feminisms Project, a podcast created by the Global Feminisms Project. The entire team hopes it will help you understand and incorporate the materials on the website into your class. If you liked this episode, check out the other podcasts in the series, as well as materials about countries, teaching resources, and interviews on the [website](#).